

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AID-05 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 CA-01 HA-05 COME-00
ACDA-12 USSS-00 /099 W
-----019076 041726Z /64

R 041422Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6194
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

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E.O. 11652: PINT, BR
TAGS: PINT, BR
SUBJECT: BOMBING INCIDENTS IN MINAS GERAIS

1. DURING THE PAST MONTH, EXTREMISTS,
EVIDENTLY FROM THE FAR RIGHTS, HAVE SET OFF EXPLOSIVE
DEVICES TARGETED AGAINST LIBERAL CRITICS OF THE REGIME
IN BELO HORIZONTE. NO PHYSICAL INJURIES HAVE RESULTED
AND PROPERTY DAMAGE HAS BEEN MINIMAL.

2. THE FIRST SERIES OF BOMBING INCIDENTS BEGAN ON
MARCH 28 WHEN SEVERAL HUNDRED FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF
MINAS GERAIS STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED IN THE NATIONAL
STUDENT OBSERVATION OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
DEATH OF A STUDENT IN THE RIO DE JANEIRO STUDENT
DISTURBANCES OF 1968. DURING THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATION
AND LATER ON MARCH 31 AND APRIL 7, BOMBS WERE SET OFF
IN SEVERAL UNIVERSITY FACULTIES AND IN THE SOCIAL
AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES OF THE CENTRAL STUDENT
DIRECTORATE (DCE). PROPERTY DAMAGE WAS ESTIMATED
AT ABOUT \$3,000. LEAFLETS LEFT AT THE SCENE ATTRI-
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BUTED THE ACTION TO THE GRUPO ANTICOMMUNISTA OF
JANUARY 28 (GAC).

3. THE SECOND SERIES OF BOMBINGS OCCURRED ON APRIL 18
DURING THE VISIT TO BELO HORIZONTE OF THE NATIONAL
PRESIDENT OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT FOR AMNESTY (MFPA)
AND A MEETING TO COMMEMORATE THE 33RD ANNIVERSARY OF

VARGAS'S AMNESTY PROCLAMATION OF 1945. A BOMB WAS THROWN AT THE RESIDENCE OF THE MINAS PRESIDENT OF THE WOMEN'S GROUP AND A TIME BOMB WAS PLACED IN THE BATHROOM OF THE AUDITORIUM WHERE SOME 1,200 PERSONS HAD GATHERED UNDER MFPA AUSPICES. THE LATTER BOMB WAS DISARMED BY POLITICAL AND SOCIAL POLICE OFFICIALS AFTER AN ANONYMOUS TELEPHONE CALL HAD ALERTED A LOCAL TELEVISION STATION. AN ADDITIONAL BOMB CAUSED SLIGHT DAMAGE TO THE DCE PRINTING SHOP PREMISES. GAC CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL THE INCIDENTS.

4. THE MINAS BRANCH OF THE BRAZILIAN BAR ASSOCIATION WAS QUICK TO CONDEMN THE BOMBINGS AS WERE STUDENT GROUPS IN BELO. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE FEDERAL POLICE HAVE INITIATED AN INQUIRY INTO THE MATTER.

5. COMMENT: THESE INCIDENTS IN MINAS GERAIS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT IN A MANNER ALMOST IDENTICAL TO THE SERIES OF BOMBINGS IN RIO DE JANEIRO IN 1976 CONDUCTED BY RIGHT WING EXTREMISTS CALLING THEMSELVES THE BRAZILIAN ANTI-COMMUNIST ALLIANCE (AAB). AT THAT TIME, OUR ASSESSMENT WAS THAT THE AAB WAS INTERESTED IN NOT ONLY FRIGHTENING RIO LIBERALS BUT IN UNDERMINING GEISEL'S POLICY OF DISTENCAO. THE MINAS INCIDENTS SOME ONE AND ONE HALF YEARS LATER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESUMABLY HAVE A MORE MODEST OBJECTIVE OF REMINDING HIGHLY VOCAL PROPONENTS OF FULL AMNESTY AND STUDENT ACTIVISM THAT HARD-CORE CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION PERSISTS, PARTICULARLY ON SENSITIVE ISSUES SUCH AS AMNESTY -- NOTWITHSTANDING THE STATED INTENTION OF THE REGIME TO MOVE TOWARDS POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. AS IN THE CASE OF THE AAB, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE THAT POLICE INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE GAC WILL LEAD TO ANY CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS.

6. EMBASSY CONCURS.
DEXTER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOMBING, CIVIL DISORDERS, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978RIODE02097
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780191-0040
Format: TEL
From: RIO DE JANEIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780593/aaaadbiy.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 88e098a4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2792638
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOMBING INCIDENTS IN MINAS GERAIS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, BR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/88e098a4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014